

# Effect of conventional and organic cropping systems on SOC dynamics

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## Study aim

To investigate soil organic carbon (SOC) content and dynamics in six different cropping systems under five-field crop rotation during first rotation.

## Description

5-years crop rotation (**winter wheat, pea, potato, barley us. red clover, red clover**) experiment in 6 cropping systems.

### Conventional cropping systems:

- \* **N0** – control
- \* **N<sub>low</sub>** – N<sub>40-50</sub>P<sub>25</sub>K<sub>95</sub>
- \* **N<sub>average</sub>** – N<sub>80-100</sub>P<sub>25</sub>K<sub>95</sub>
- \* **N<sub>high</sub>** – N<sub>120-150</sub>P<sub>25</sub>K<sub>95</sub>

### Organic cropping systems:

- \* **Org I** – green manure catch crops (before pea, potato and barley);
- \* **Org II** – green manure catch crops combined with composted cattle manure

Each system in 4 replications = 120 plots

Each plot = 60 m<sup>2</sup>

**Site:** Eerika experimental field (58°22'N, 26°40'E) near to Tartu, Estonia

**Climate:** Precipitation 591 mm/y

Mean annual temperature 4.4 (-30...+30) °C

**Soil:** sandy loam *Albic Stagnic Luvisol*

## Experimental place and design



## Results

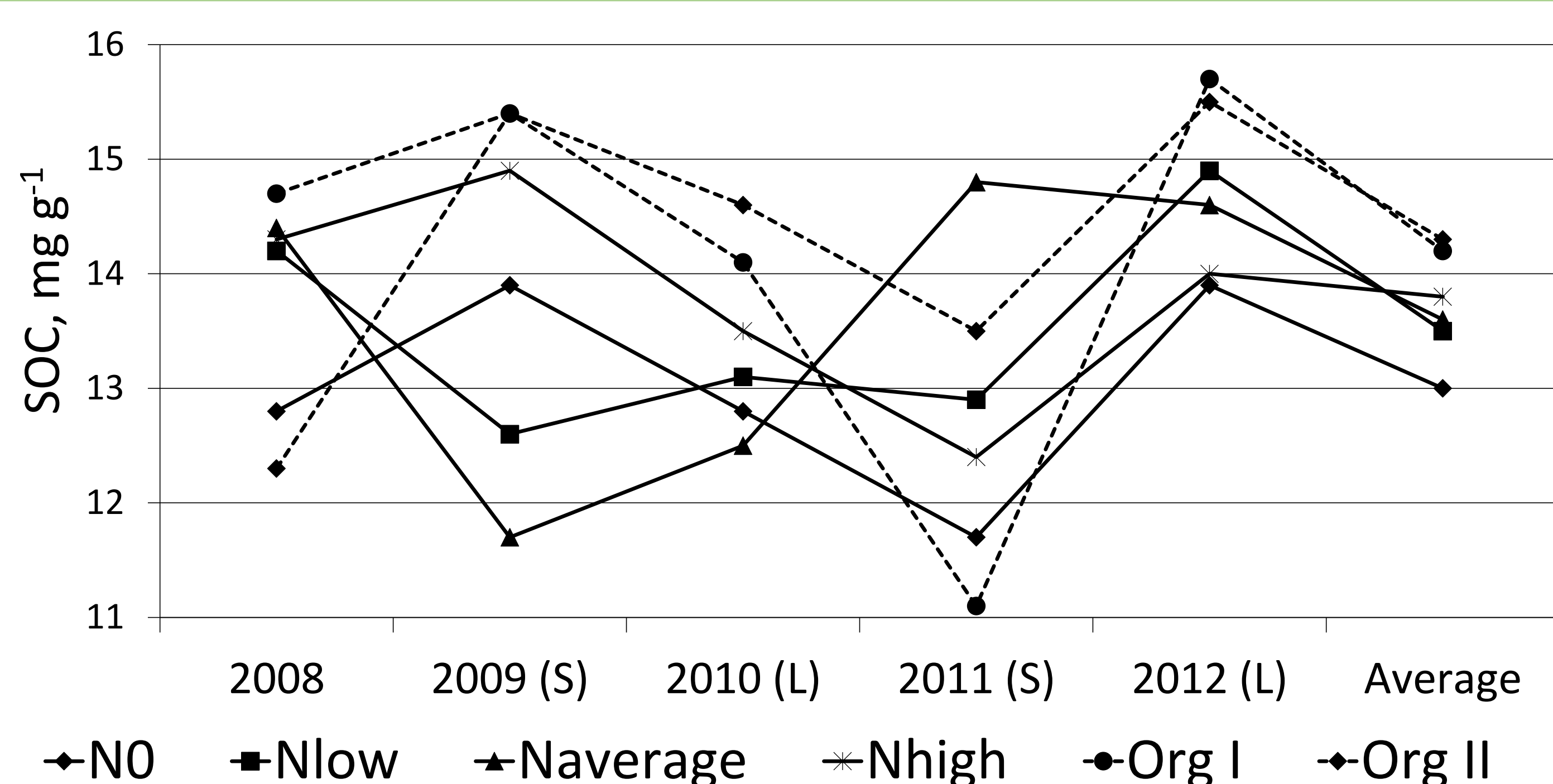


Figure 1. Soil organic carbon content (mg g<sup>-1</sup>). (S) after-effect of straw; (L) after-effect of legume.

## Results and discussion

- The SOC concentrations increased in cropping systems with low nitrogen rate;
- No significant change was detected in systems with higher nitrogen rate;
- The SOC content was significantly higher in organic systems compared to conventional systems indicating that in organic systems the organic matter mineralization did not exceed the amount of organic matter input into soil;
- SOC content variability in cropping systems was higher when the straw material was incorporated into soil;
- **To conclude:** SOC dynamics were dependent on differences in the chemical composition of organic matter.

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